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Report of the Disarmament Commission for 2006

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Supplement No. 42 (A/61/42)

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Contents

Chapter		*Paragraphs*	*Page*
I.	Introduction	1–2	1
II.	Organization and work of the 2006 substantive session	3–13	2
III.	Documentation	14–15	4
	A. Documents submitted by the Secretary-General	14	4
	B. Other documents, including documents submitted by Member States	15	4
IV.	Conclusions and recommendations	16–20	5

I. Introduction

1. At its sixtieth session, on 8 December 2005, the General Assembly adopted resolution 60/91, entitled "Report of the Disarmament Commission", which reads as follows:

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Disarmament Commission,[1]

Recalling its resolutions 47/54 A of 9 December 1992, 47/54 G of 8 April 1993, 48/77 A of 16 December 1993, 49/77 A of 15 December 1994, 50/72 D of 12 December 1995, 51/47 B of 10 December 1996, 52/40 B of 9 December 1997, 53/79 A of 4 December 1998, 54/56 A of 1 December 1999, 55/35 C of 20 November 2000, 56/26 A of 29 November 2001, 57/95 of 22 November 2002, 58/67 of 8 December 2003 and 59/105 of 3 December 2004,

Considering the role that the Disarmament Commission has been called upon to play and the contribution that it should make in examining and submitting recommendations on various problems in the field of disarmament and in the promotion of the implementation of the relevant decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session,

Bearing in mind its decision 52/492 of 8 September 1998,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Disarmament Commission;[1]

2. *Reaffirms* the mandate of the Disarmament Commission as the specialized, deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery that allows for in-depth deliberations on specific disarmament issues, leading to the submission of concrete recommendations on those issues;

3. *Reaffirms also* the importance of further enhancing the dialogue and cooperation among the First Committee of the General Assembly, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament;

4. *Requests* the Disarmament Commission to continue its work in accordance with its mandate, as set forth in paragraph 118 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly,[2] and with paragraph 3 of Assembly resolution 37/78 H of 9 December 1982, and to that end to make every effort to achieve specific recommendations on the items on its agenda, taking into account the adopted "Ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission";[3]

5. *Welcomes* the efforts made by the Disarmament Commission during its organizational meeting in July 2005 towards achieving its objectives, and recommends that the Commission intensify consultations on those efforts with a view to reaching definitive agreements before the start of its substantive session in 2006;

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixtieth Session, Supplement No. 42* (A/60/42).
[2] Resolution S-10/2.
[3] A/CN.10/137.

6. *Requests* the Disarmament Commission to meet for a period not exceeding three weeks during 2006, from 10 to 28 April, and to submit a substantive report to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit to the Disarmament Commission the annual report of the Conference on Disarmament,[4] together with all the official records of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly relating to disarmament matters, and to render all assistance that the Commission may require for implementing the present resolution;

8. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to ensure the full provision to the Disarmament Commission and its subsidiary bodies of interpretation and translation facilities in the official languages and to assign, as a matter of priority, all the necessary resources and services, including verbatim records, to that end;

9. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-first session the item entitled "Report of the Disarmament Commission".

2. The Disarmament Commission held its organizational session at United Nations Headquarters on 28 March 2006. During that session, at its 268th plenary meeting (A/CN.10/PV.268), the Commission considered questions related to the organization of work and substantive agenda items for its 2006 substantive session in accordance with the adopted "Ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission" (A/CN.10/137) and in the light of General Assembly resolution 60/91. The Commission took up the question of the election of its officers, taking into account the principle of rotation of the chairmanship among the geographic regions. The Commission considered the provisional agenda for the 2006 substantive session and decided to establish a committee of the whole and two working groups to deal with two substantive items on the agenda. The Commission further decided that the issue of measures for improving the effectiveness of methods of work of the Commission will be dealt with in plenary meetings, with equitable time allocated to it.

II. Organization and work of the 2006 substantive session

3. The Disarmament Commission held its substantive session of 2006 from 10 to 28 April 2006 at United Nations Headquarters. In the course of its session, the Commission held seven plenary meetings (see A/CN.10/PV.269-275) and four informal meetings under the chairmanship of Ambassador Joon Oh (Republic of Korea). Mr. Timur Alasaniya, Senior Political Affairs Officer of the Disarmament and Decolonization Affairs Branch, Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, served as the Secretary of the Commission, and Mr. Ioan Tudor, Senior Political Affairs Officer of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, represented the substantive secretariat.

4. During the 2006 session, the Bureau of the Commission was constituted as follows:

Chairman: Joon **Oh** (Republic of Korea)

[4] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixtieth Session, Supplement No. 27* (A/60/27).

Vice-Chairmen: Representatives of the following Member States: Austria, Belarus, Benin, Chile, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Poland and Uruguay

Rapporteur: Coly **Seck** (Senegal)

5. At its 268th plenary meeting, on 28 March 2006, the Commission adopted its provisional agenda, contained in document A/CN.10/L.57, as follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Organization of work.
4. Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.
5. Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons.
6. Report of the Disarmament Commission to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session.
7. Other business.

6. At the same meeting, the Commission approved its general programme of work for the session (A/CN.10/2006/CRP.1) and decided to allocate four meetings to a general exchange of views.

7. On 10 and 11 April, the Disarmament Commission held a general exchange of views on all agenda items (A/CN.10/PV.269-272). The representatives of the following countries made statements during the general exchange of views: Algeria, Australia, Austria (on behalf of the European Union), Bangladesh, Belarus, Brazil, China, Chile, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Guyana (on behalf the Rio Group), India, Indonesia (on behalf of States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Non-Aligned Movement), the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, San Marino, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Switzerland, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America and Viet Nam.

8. At its first meeting, on 10 April, the Commission heard the statement of the Under-Secretary for Disarmament Affairs, Nobuaki Tanaka (A/CN.10/PV.269).

9. In accordance with the decision taken at its organizational session, the Disarmament Commission entrusted Working Group I with the mandate of dealing with agenda item 4, entitled "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons". Working Group I met under the chairmanship of Jean-Francis Régis Zinsou (Benin) and held seven meetings between 18 and 28 April.

10. The Commission entrusted Working Group II with the mandate of dealing with agenda item 5, entitled "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons". Working Group II met under the chairmanship of Carlos Duarte (Brazil) and held seven meetings between 12 and 28 April.

11. In accordance with the same decision, the issue of measures for improving the effectiveness of methods of work was considered by the Commission at its four

informal meetings of the whole under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Joon Oh and Friend of the Chair Ambassador Sylvester Rowe (Sierra Leone). In the course of the consideration of the issue, two conference room papers containing the Chairman's summary (see A/CN.10.2006/CRP.3 and 4) were submitted.

12. At its 275th plenary meeting, on 28 April, the Disarmament Commission considered the draft report of the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission on measures for improving effectiveness of the Commission's methods of work as well as the reports of Working Groups I and II on agenda items 4 and 5, respectively. The reports of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies and the conclusions and recommendations contained therein are included in section IV of the present report.

13. In accordance with past practice of the Disarmament Commission, some non-governmental organizations attended the plenary meetings.

III. Documentation

A. Documents submitted by the Secretary-General

14. Pursuant to paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 60/91, the Secretary-General, by a note dated 7 March 2006, transmitted to the Disarmament Commission the annual report of the Conference on Disarmament, together with all the official records of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly relating to disarmament matters (A/CN.10/203).

B. Other documents, including documents submitted by Member States

15. In the course of the Commission's work, the documents listed below, dealing with substantive questions, were submitted:

(a) Conference room paper submitted by Indonesia on behalf of States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Non-Aligned Movement (A/CN.10/2006/CRP.2);

(b) Conference room paper, entitled "Discussion on measures for improving the effectiveness of the methods of work of the Disarmament Commission — Chairman's summary of plenary meetings of April 13 and April 17" submitted by the Chairman of the Commission (A/CN.10/2006/CRP.3);

(c) Conference room paper, entitled "Discussion on measures for improving the effectiveness of the methods of work of the Disarmament Commission — Chairman's summary" submitted by the Chairman of the Commission (A/CN.10/2006/CRP.4);

(d) Working paper submitted by the United States of America (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/WP.1);

(e) Working paper submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/WP.2);

(f) Working paper submitted by China (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/WP.3);

(g) Working paper submitted by the Chairman of Working Group I (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/WP.4 and Rev.1);

(h) Working paper submitted by France (A/CN.10/2006/WG.1/WP.5);

(i) Working paper submitted by France (A/CN.10/2006/WG.1/WP.6);

(j) Two conference room papers submitted by the Chairman of Working Group I (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/CRP.1 and Rev.1);

(k) Conference room paper submitted by Chile, Costa Rica, Brazil, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand and Sweden (A/CN.10/2006/WG.1/CRP.2);

(l) Three conference room papers submitted by Austria on behalf of the European Union (A/CN.10/2006/WG.1/CRP.3-5);

(m) Conference room paper submitted by the Chairman of Working Group I, entitled "Draft outline" (A.CN.10/2006/WG.1/CRP.7);

(n) Three conference room papers, entitled "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons", submitted by the Chairman of Working Group II (A/CN.10/2006/WG.II/CRP.1 and Rev.1 and 2);

(o) Working paper submitted by Pakistan (A/CN.10/2006/WG.II/WP.1).

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

16. In the course of deliberations on the issue of measures for improving the effectiveness of the methods of work, the Commission reaffirmed that General Assembly decision 52/492, adopted on 8 September 1998, concerning the efficient functioning of the Commission, remains valid. The Commission by consensus recommends to the General Assembly for its consideration and adoption the following additional measures for improving the effectiveness of the Commission's methods of work:

(a) The Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies should be elected at an organizational session of the Commission, if possible at least three months before the beginning of the substantive session. The regional groups should accordingly, present their candidates as soon as possible to ensure that such elections take place within that time frame;

(b) Member States are encouraged to adopt the draft agenda of the substantive session of the Commission as early as possible at the organizational meetings of the Commission;

(c) Member States are encouraged to present their national working documents to the Commission as early as possible before the beginning of the substantive session to facilitate deliberation in the meetings ahead;

(d) The Commission should make efforts to strengthen dialogue with other bodies of the disarmament machinery of the United Nations, that is, the First Committee of the General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament;

(e) The Commission is encouraged to invite, as appropriate, experts on disarmament, including those at the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, for discussions at its plenary meetings;

(f) The Secretariat is requested to improve the Disarmament Commission section of the United Nations website to provide better communication and up-to-date information about the work of the Commission, and in particular to make available in a timely manner the information and documentation relevant to the Commission's deliberations.

17. At its 275th plenary meeting, on 28 April, the Disarmament Commission adopted by consensus the reports of its subsidiary bodies and the conclusions and recommendations contained therein regarding agenda items 4 and 5. The Commission agreed to submit the texts of those reports, reproduced below, to the General Assembly.

18. At the same meeting, the Commission adopted, as a whole, its report to be presented to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session.

19. The report of Working Group I reads as follows:

Draft report of Working Group I on agenda item 4

1. At its 268th meeting, on 28 March 2006, the Disarmament Commission adopted its agenda for the 2006 substantive session (A/CN.10/L.57), and decided to allocate to Working Group I agenda item 4, entitled "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons". At its 274th meeting, on 17 April, the Commission elected Jean-Francis Régis Zinsou (Benin) as Chairman of Working Group I.

2. In connection with its work, Working Group I had before it the following documents:

(a) Working paper submitted by the United States of America (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/WP.1);

(b) Working paper submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/WP.2);

(c) Working paper submitted by China (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/WP.3);

(d) Working paper submitted by the Chairman (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/WP.4 and Rev.1);

(e) Working papers submitted by France (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/WP.5 and 6);

(f) Conference room paper submitted by the Chairman (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/CRP.1 and Rev.1);

(g) Conference room paper submitted by Chile, Costa Rica, Brazil, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand and Sweden (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/CRP.2);

(h) Conference room papers submitted by Austria on behalf of the European Union (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/CRP.3-5);

(i) Draft report of Working Group I on agenda item 4 (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/CRP.6 and Rev.1);

(j) Conference room paper submitted by the Chairman, entitled "Draft outline" (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/CRP.7).

3. The Working Group held seven meetings between 18 and 28 April 2006. The Chairman also conducted a number of informal consultations. Sergei Cherniavsky of the Disarmament and Decolonization Affairs Branch, Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, served as the Secretary of the Working Group. Nikolai Rogosaroff of the Department for Disarmament Affairs served as adviser to the Working Group.

4. The first two meetings were devoted to general exchange of views. At the third meeting, delegations introduced working papers and commented on the issues related to item 4.

5. At the fourth meeting of the Working Group, on 24 April, the Chairman submitted a working paper, entitled "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons" (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/WP.4), which took into consideration written and oral submissions, and which was commented on by delegations. The Chairman also submitted another document, in the form of a conference room paper (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/CRP.1).

6. At the fifth meeting of the Working Group, on 25 April, preliminary discussions took place on specific elements contained in the Chairman's conference room paper (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/CRP.1). Delegations made a number of written and oral proposals on the paper.

7. At the sixth meeting of the Working Group, on 26 April, the Chairman introduced a revised version of his working paper (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/WP.4/Rev.1) and the revised version of his conference room paper (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/CRP.1/Rev.1). At the same time, he presented another conference room paper entitled "Draft outline" (A/CN.10/2006/WG.I/CRP.7).

8. The Chairman's papers are presented without prejudice to the positions of any delegation or group of delegations. They are his sole responsibility and do not represent a negotiated position nor command consensus.

9. A number of delegations expressed reservations on some of the issues contained in the Chairman's papers.

10. At its seventh meeting, on 28 April, the Working Group considered and adopted by consensus its report on agenda item 4. It also decided to forward the documents listed in paragraph 2 of the present report to the 2007 session of the Commission.

20. The report of Working Group II reads as follows:

Draft report of Working Group II

1. At its organizational session at its 268th meeting on 28 March 2006, the Disarmament Commission adopted its agenda for the 2006 substantive session (A/CN.10/L.57), and decided to allocate to Working Group II agenda item 5 entitled "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons".

2. The Working Group, under the chairmanship of Mr. Carlos Duarte (Brazil), held seven meetings between 12 and 28 April. Ms. Christa Giles, of

the Disarmament and Decolonization Affairs Branch, Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, served as the Secretary of the Working Group, and Ms. Pamela Maponga of the Department for Disarmament Affairs served as an adviser to the Working Group.

3. The Chairman submitted a conference room paper (A/CN.10/2006/WG.II/CRP.1). In this connection, a working paper was also submitted by Pakistan (see A/CN.10/2006/WG.II/WP.1).

4. At its 1st meeting, on 12 April, Working Group II held a general exchange of views on the subject. At the same meeting, Working Group II agreed to take up a conference room paper, to be prepared by the Chairman, updating the text of the previous Chairman's consolidated working paper, Rev.4, which was attached to the report of the Disarmament Commission for 2003 (A/58/42, annex, attachment), as a basis for discussion. From its 2nd meeting, on 13 April, the Working Group engaged in substantive discussions and consultations on the Chairman's conference room paper. During this period, written and oral proposals were made by delegations. As a result, the Chairman submitted two revisions of his paper (A/CN.10/2006/WG.II/CRP.1/Rev.1 and 2).

5. At its 6th meeting, on 27 April, the Working Group considered the Chairman's conference room paper, A/CN.10/2006/WG.II/CRP.1/Rev.2, entitled "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons". Delegations acknowledged that the Chairman's conference room paper constituted a significant effort to reflect the state of Working Group II's discussions. The Group decided to consider the paper, also taking into account the views and proposals relating to it expressed at its 6th meeting on 27 April, as a possible basis for its work at the next session of the Disarmament Commission in 2007.

6. At its 7th meeting, on 28 April, the Working Group considered and adopted by consensus its report on agenda item 5.

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